

WASHINGTON—Disabled American Veterans National Commander Roberto “Bobby” Barrera today presented a special “Going to Bat for Veterans” award to Rep. Chet Edwards in recognition of his leadership and support for legislation that will ensure sufficient, timely and predictable funding for veterans health care. Rep. Edwards received his award in front of hundreds of disabled veterans prior to addressing the group during their Mid-Winter Conference in Washington, D.C.

“Without Rep. Edwards’ support of this vital legislation, the Department of Veterans Affairs would have difficulty planning for the future, hiring sufficient staff to deliver timely services, and construction and repairs to its medical facilities would be delayed,” said **National Commander Barrera.**

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Congressman Edwards, Chairman of the Military Construction and Veterans Affairs Appropriations Subcommittee, said, *“For the first time ever, Congress and the president have passed advance appropriations for VA medical care into law, which allows the VA to invest taxpayers’ dollars more effectively and efficiently while delivering health care benefits to veterans in a timely manner. □ It would not have happened without the principled leadership of Disabled American Veterans, who made it their highest priority. It was a privilege to partner with Disabled American Veterans to keep our promises to America’s veterans and send a clear message that we deeply respect their service and sacrifice. ”*

The Veterans Health Care Budget Reform and Transparency Act authorizes Congress to approve veterans medical care funding one year in advance to better meet the anticipated demand for veterans health care services. The advanced funding will give the Department of Veterans Affairs up to a full year to plan for the most effective and efficient way of delivering medical care. Additionally, this would require the Government Accountability Office to review the

budget development process to ensure that sufficient funds are included.

"This legislation will help every disabled veteran and every future disabled veteran," said **Commander Barrera**

"This important legislation was passed because so many in Congress saw the need to put an end to chronic lapses in budgets that had persisted for decades. They stood up for veterans together, and veterans and their families are going to benefit."